



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

# Public Health

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June 9, 2008

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Jonathan E. Fielding, M.D., M.P.H. *JE Fielding*  
Director and Health Officer

SUBJECT: **SYPHILIS AND OTHER STD CONTROL EFFORTS**

On June 13, 2006, the Board approved a motion by Supervisors Yaroslavsky and Molina to develop and implement a comprehensive strategy directed at prevention and intervention of syphilis and other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs).

In late June 2006, I provided you with a draft report for consideration in the budget deliberations. During July and August 2006, we refined the plan in consultation with the Board offices. On September 20, 2006, I provided the Board offices with the final report with a comprehensive strategy, media campaign, budget and timeline. On September 26, 2006, as part of the supplemental budget, the Board approved funding of \$700,000 provided by Supervisor Yaroslavsky's funds for fiscal year (FY) 2006-07. Combined with the \$500,000 in one-time savings identified by the Department, we had enough funding to begin implementation of the project. Status reports were provided to the Board on November 20, 2006, and February 5, February 27, April 16, May 23, July 3, and October 11, 2007.

This is to provide you with a status report with particular attention to activities since the most recent report.

## **SOCIAL MARKETING PLAN**

On March 13, 2007, the Board approved an agreement with Fraser Communications to implement the social marketing component of this plan.

### **Background and Accomplishments to Date**

#### **1. Community Advisory Groups (CAGs):**

Men Who Have Sex with Men (MSM) CAG:

The MSM CAG has not met again formally since the last meeting on October 3, 2007. However, STD Program (STDP) staff has been contacting CAG members and other MSM-oriented venues and organizations to offer "Check Yourself" posters and palm cards for clients, resulting in substantial dissemination of materials. A new meeting of the CAG will be held in June 2008 to review new campaign elements and media plans for 2008.

#### Women of Color CAG

The Women of Color CAG met on Thursday, June 5, 2008 to review TV ad concepts and the new 2008 media plan.

#### 2. Campaign Development, Implementation and Campaign-Linked Outreach:

Paid ads and placements for the "I Know" campaign in 2007 generated a total of 140,210,688 ad views (number of times the ads or placements were seen, including repeat exposures), including:

- Billboards (125 billboards): 66,430,000 ad views
- Exterior bus ads (160): 35,328,000 ad views
- Interior bus cards (800): 32,884,632 ad views
- Mirror clings (200): 3,000,000 ad views
- Lifestyle posters (500): 20,000,000 ad views
- Classic boards (20): 626,400 ad views
- County Fair Jumbotron video ads (468 15-second spots): 1,427,656 ad views
- Print (2 ads): 420,000 ad views

"Check Yourself" paid ads and placements in 2007 generated a total of 88,542,181 ad views, including:

- Print (13 ads in 4 publications): 834,000 ad views
- Bus shelters (60): 82,464,000 ad views
- Health club posters (26) and mirror swipes (48): 5,063,040 ad views

Websites for both campaigns ([www.DontThinkKnow.org](http://www.DontThinkKnow.org) and [www.ReallyCheckYourself.org](http://www.ReallyCheckYourself.org)) also continue to operate in both English and Spanish, and have received a minimum of 2,274 and 2,017 unique visitors, respectively. In addition, the STD Program is building a MySpace web page for the "I Know" campaign and initiated 15-second "I Know" campaign spots on YouTube. The STD Program is also doing online outreach on Adam4Adam.com. Outreach on Manhunt.net has been ongoing for over a year.

Complementary Internet ads for "Check Yourself" have continued to run on a popular MSM personals website at no cost. These ads have been periodically updated. In the 6-month period following the inception of these web ads on July 11, 2007, the ads received a total of 181,141 views, and 589 click-throughs, for an average click-through rate of 0.33%, an excellent rate for health promotion banner ads.

Ninety four thousand "I Know" postcards and 520 "I Know" posters received commercial placement in hair and nail salons and other venues as part of the campaign. To date, the STD Program has disseminated 58,400 postcards, 1,199 posters, and nearly all 1,000 mirror clings to community agencies, schools, clinics, and other venues.

In addition, 100,000 "I Know" condom holders, in six designs (2 in Spanish) were shipped to the STD Program and 35 other agencies including the California Family Health Council (CFHC) on October 23, 2007 and December 21, 2007. CFHC has also ordered 24,000 "I Know" condom key chains ("keypers") and 30,000 "I Know" lip balms. The condom holders, lip balms, and keychains were printed by California Family Health Council (CFHC) using non-County funds.

Fifty Thousand "Check Yourself" outreach palm cards and 1,000 posters are being distributed by the STD Program, MSM CAG members, outreach workers, and Commercial Sex Venues. A small quantity of "Check Yourself" t-shirts and messenger bags were also obtained for use by the "Check Yourself" outreach team. This team consisted of six part-time outreach workers and a coordinator recruited and trained through the Fraser media contract to conduct campaign-linked outreach targeting MSM. This team conducted 36 evening outreaches in various neighborhoods and venues in 2007, and handed out nearly 5,000 palm cards. To date, the STD Program has provided 626 posters, 25,300 palm cards, and 5 large bus shelter posters to the Outreach Team, directly to venues, or to community agencies, including 28 framed posters and 12,100 "Check Yourself" palm cards distributed to Commercial Sex Venues on November 7, 2007.

The STD Program collaborated with Emmis Radio Corporation, owner of the Power 106 radio station, to provide outreach activities linked to the Women of Color ("I Know") campaign from July 13, 2007 through November 2007. This collaboration, which was funded separately through the Los Angeles County Infertility Prevention Project at a total cost of \$109,000, included a microsite ([www.power106.fm/iknow](http://www.power106.fm/iknow)), email blasts, text messaging, on-air radio announcements, and 60 outreach events.

## **Year 2 Social Marketing Campaign**

As of April 18, 2008, full funding has been identified and allocated for Year 2 of the STD plan and activities are underway to implement the "I Know" and "Check Yourself" campaigns. New campaign elements will begin prior to July 1, 2008.

For the "I Know" campaign, new elements will include a 30-second cable television ad (approximately 1,500 spots), 800 bus cards, 5,670 30-second spots on movie theater screens, selected print ads, 33 restroom posters, new collateral materials (including posters, palm cards, and additional items to be determined), and online advertising on approximately 4 websites. In addition, modifications will be made to the "I Know" website ([www.DontThinkKnow.org](http://www.DontThinkKnow.org)) to enable individuals to order home test kits online, and to review results securely through the website. The change will enable potentially significant expansion of testing to individuals who do not or will not regularly access clinics. In support of the campaign, STDP has designated a part-time staff member to promote use of campaign materials (including condom holders, condom keychains, and lip balms developed for the campaign by the California Family Health Council), by local youth-serving organizations. STDP has also prepared a CD with campaign elements, printable posters, draft news articles, a presentation covering chlamydia, gonorrhea, and the campaign, and uploadable copies of both 15-second County Fair Jumbotron ads. This CD will be made available to community agencies. In addition, STDP is coordinating with the California Family Health Council (CFHC) to develop a street outreach team to further promote the "I Know" campaign (at no additional County cost).

For the "Check Yourself" campaign, new elements will include 34 print ads in 6 publications, 25 bus shelters concentrated in core MSM syphilis morbidity areas, 5,040 on-screen movie theater slides, 76,000 bar coasters to be distributed in 15 selected venues, 100,000 coffee sleeves to be distributed in 15-20 selected cafes, 77 restroom posters, collateral materials (including posters and palm cards) and ongoing monthly banner ads on ManHunt.net. To support the high volume of print ads, 2 or 3 new print images will be created for the campaign. The "Check Yourself" outreach team is also being re-activated to distribute collateral materials to individuals and venues.

### **Campaign evaluation**

Baseline surveys (i.e., pre-campaign), developed by the STD Program and Fraser Communications, were completed for each of the two campaigns on June 7, 2007 with a total of 301 Women of Color respondents and 203 MSM respondents. Fraser Communications provided a report analyzing data from these surveys to STD Program staff on August 27, 2007. A second round of surveys is included in the second year of the scope of work developed for Fraser Communications, to assess the impact of both social marketing campaigns on STD testing behavior, knowledge and attitudes. The second round of surveys will be completed after Year 2 of the campaign is complete.

### **CASE FINDING AND TREATMENT**

Nine of the 12 positions allocated in the STD Program for this project are currently filled:

- **1 Public Health Investigator Manager** (position filled)
- **5 Public Health Investigators** (5 positions filled)
- **3 Community Services Counselors/Community Workers** (2 of 3 positions filled)
- **1 Research Analyst III, Internet Interventions** (position vacant)
- **2 Student Professional Workers** (1 of 2 positions filled)

### **Public Health Investigators (PHIs)**

Four of the PHIs hired to work at STD headquarters completed their technical training and all passed their final exam in March of 2008. A fifth position was filled in December of 2007. Training for this position is ongoing until December of 2008, at which time the trainee will take the final exam.

Hiring of additional PHIs has greatly increased efficiencies among PHIs. Prior to staff hiring, PHIs had a caseload of approximately 80 cases per person. This number has been reduced to approximately 25 cases per person. This has allowed staff to focus on critical disease intervention activities, such as screening and partner treatment in high morbidity venues such as jails, which has identified more cases in this setting. Staff are also able to work with Community Based Organization (CBO) partners to identify and treat infectious patients and partners, conduct community outreach activities and provide needed support to district PHIs with high syphilis caseloads.

### **Community PHIs**

Two agencies, Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Center (LAGLC) and AIDS Healthcare Foundation (AHF), with a minimum of 100 early syphilis cases per year were selected to provide community PHI services. On October 16, 2007 the Board authorized the Director of Public Health to issue contracts in the amount of \$65,000 to each agency.

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Two PHIs were hired on November 1, 2007 to provide community-based PHI services at LAGLC and AHF. Both PHIs completed training in March of 2008 and are now interviewing clients, entering data, conducting field follow up activities and providing clinic support.

The STD Program will be conducting an evaluation of the community-based PHI model, which is designed to improve the quality of partner notification services provided to newly diagnosed syphilis and HIV clients, as well as previously positive HIV clients with an STD co-infection. Baseline data collection began in April of 2008; preliminary analysis will begin by the end of August to allow sufficient time for STD cases to be closed out and entered into the data system.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please let me know.

JEF:js  
PH:606:015(13)

c: Chief Executive Officer  
County Counsel  
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors